

Elon and Errol Musk (father)

Musk was born on June 28, 1971, in Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa. During his childhood Elon had an interest in reading and often did so for hours at a time. Musk was severely bullied throughout his childhood, and was once hospitalized when a group of boys threw him down a flight of stairs and then beat him until he lost consciousness.

Musk was initially educated at private schools, attending the English-speaking Waterkloof House Preparatory School. Musk later graduated from Pretoria Boys High School and moved to Canada in June 1989, just before his 18th birthday. While at the University of Pennsylvania, Musk and fellow Penn student Adeo Ressi rented a 10-bedroom fraternity house, using it as an unofficial nightclub. In 1995, at age 24, Musk moved to California to begin a PhD in applied physics and materials science at Stanford University, but left the program after two days to pursue his entrepreneurial aspirations in the areas of the Internet, renewable energy and outer space. In 1995, Musk and his brother, Kimbal, started Zip2, a web software company, with US\$28,000 of their father's money.

Compaq acquired Zip2 for US\$307 million in cash and US\$34 million in stock options in February 1999. Musk received 7% or US\$22 million from the sale. Errol Musk is a South African electromechanical engineer, pilot and sailor.

Walter Sisulu and Nelson Mandela

Walter Max Ulyate Sisulu (18 May 1912 – 5 May 2003) was a South African anti-apartheid activist and member of the African National Congress (ANC), serving at times as Secretary-General and Deputy President of the organization. His mother, Alice Mase Sisulu, was a Xhosa domestic worker and his father, Albert Victor Dickenson, was white.

Sisulu was the man who recruited Nelson Mandela into the ANC in the 1940s. Although Sisulu was only six years older than Mandela, he was in a more senior position in the ANC, and played a key role in his younger colleague's political education. Together they radicalized the ANC and engaged in more direct action against the apartheid regime throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. With other leaders they were arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment in 1964. They would spend the next quarter of a century in jail on Robben Island.

He married Albertina in 1944; Nelson Mandela was his best man at their wedding.

It was in prison that Mandela gradually emerged from Sisulu's shadow and took on the leadership role that Sisulu had been preparing him for since their first meeting back in 1941. Sisulu recognized his protégé's leadership qualities, and was happy to let him take a more senior role.

At the same time, he still advised his old protégé and challenged him – some of their clashes were so vigorous that their colleagues were sometimes shocked. Sisulu believed in free expression of ideas, regardless of personal relationships, and that was something he passed on to Mandela.

But even as he was leading a movement and then a nation, Mandela still relied on his old mentor Walter Sisulu. The New York Times obituary for Sisulu noted that "While Mr. Mandela was the public face of the African National Congress, by his own account he rarely acted without first consulting Mr. Sisulu."

Bonnie Sherr Klein and Naomi Klein (mother)

Naomi Klein was born in Montreal, Quebec, and brought up in a Jewish family with a history of peace activism. Her parents were self-described "hippies" who moved to Montreal from the U.S. in 1967 as war resisters to the Vietnam War. Her mother, documentary film-maker Bonnie Sherr Klein, is best known for her anti-pornography film *Not a Love Story*. Her father, Michael Klein, is a physician and a member of Physicians for Social Responsibility. Her brother, Seth Klein, is director of the British Columbia office of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

Klein spent much of her teenage years in shopping malls, obsessed with designer labels. As a child and teenager, she found it "very oppressive to have a very public feminist mother" and she rejected politics, instead embracing "full-on consumerism".

She has attributed her change in worldview to two events. One was when she was 17 and preparing for the University of Toronto, her mother had a stroke and became severely disabled. Naomi, her father, and her brother took care of Bonnie through the period in hospital and at home, making educational sacrifices to do so. That year off prevented her "from being such a brat". The next year, after beginning her studies at the University of Toronto, the second event occurred: the 1989 École Polytechnique massacre of female engineering students, which proved to be a wake-up call to feminism.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Mahatma Gandhi

Gokhale was one of the social and political leaders during the Indian Independence Movement against the British Empire in India. Gokhale was a senior leader of the Indian National Congress and founder of the Servants of India Society. Through the Society as well as the Congress and other legislative bodies he served in, Gokhale campaigned for Indian self-rule and also social reform. He was the leader of the moderate faction of the Congress party that advocated reforms by working with existing government institutions.

Gokhale was famously a mentor to Mahatma Gandhi in his formative years. In 1912, Gokhale visited South Africa at Gandhi's invitation. As a young barrister, Gandhi returned from his struggles against the Empire in South Africa and received personal guidance from Gokhale, including a knowledge and understanding of India and the issues confronting common Indians. By 1920, Gandhi emerged as the leader of the Indian Independence Movement. In his autobiography, Gandhi calls Gokhale his mentor and guide. Gandhi also recognised Gokhale as an admirable leader and master politician, describing him as *pure as crystal, gentle as a lamb, brave as a lion and chivalrous to a fault and the most perfect man in the political field*. Despite his deep respect for Gokhale, however, Gandhi would reject Gokhale's faith in western institutions as a means of achieving political reform and ultimately chose not to become a member of Gokhale's Servants of India Society. Gokhale was also the role model and mentor of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the future founder of Pakistan, who in 1912, aspired to become the "Muslim Gokhale".

Benjamin Mays and Martin Luther King

Benjamin Elijah Mays (August 1, 1894 – March 28, 1984) was an American Baptist minister, activist, humanitarian, and leader in the Civil Rights Movement. He is best known for his role in the advancement of civil rights, and the progression of political rights of African Americans in America.

He was president of Moorhouse College where one of his most famous students was someone who benefitted deeply from his educational and religious philosophies - Martin Luther King Jr. The

two developed a close relationship that continued until King's death in 1968. Dr. King referred to Mays as his "Spiritual Mentor", and he saw in Mays "the ideal of what [he] wanted a minister to be." Mays delivered the eulogy for King at his funeral.

Mays emphasized two themes throughout his life: the dignity of all human beings and the gap between American democratic ideals and American social practices. Those became key elements of the message of King and the American civil rights movement. Mays explored these themes at length in his book *Seeking to Be a Christian in Race Relations*, published in 1957.

Dietrich Eckart and Adolf Hitler

Dietrich Eckart (23 March 1868 – 26 December 1923) was a German journalist, playwright, poet, and politician who was one of the founders of the *Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (German Workers' Party - DAP), which later evolved into the Nazi Party (NSDAP). He was a key influence on Adolf Hitler in the early years of the Nazi Party and was a participant in the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch.

Eckart was a successful playwright, which not only made him wealthy, it gave him the social contacts that he later used to introduce Hitler to dozens of important German citizens. These introductions proved to be pivotal in Hitler's ultimate rise to power. Eckart met Adolf Hitler when Hitler gave a speech before the DAP members in 1919. Eckart was involved with the Thule Society, although not a member. The Society was a secretive group of occultists who believed in the coming of a "German Messiah" who would redeem Germany after its defeat in World War I. Eckart expressed his anticipation in a poem he wrote months before he first met Hitler. In the poem, Eckart refers to 'the Great One', 'the Nameless One', 'Whom all can sense but no one saw'. When Eckart met Hitler, he was convinced that he had encountered the prophesied redeemer. Eckart became Hitler's mentor, exchanging ideas with him and helping to establish theories and beliefs of the Party.

He died shortly after the *putsch*, and was elevated during the Nazi era to the status of a major thinker and writer.

Michael Jackson (Kobe Bryant) and Robert M. Pirsig (Phil Jackson)

1) During the summer after his rookie season, Bryant received a phone call from none other than the late Michael Jackson. "Keep doing what you're doing," Jackson said. "Don't come back to the pack and be normal for the sake of blending in with others. Don't dumb it down." "You've got to study all the greats," Jackson told Kobe. "You've got to learn what made them successful and what made them unsuccessful."

A message that would resonate with Kobe throughout his career and help mold him into the ferocious player so many people love to hate.

They would stay in contact for years while Kobe climbed to the peak of basketball greatness and Jackson kept making music. But it would all come to an end when both were taken to court for separate charges related to sexual misconduct. This would bring a halt to their relationship, as being associated with each other could do further damage to their already tarnished public perception.

But Kobe still remembers Jackson as one of the greatest influences in his life. "*Michael Jackson was probably the biggest mentor I've ever had,*" Bryant says. "*That phone call in Gold's Gym literally changed my life.*"

2) Robert Maynard Pirsig (born September 6, 1928) is an American writer and philosopher, and the author of the philosophical novel *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* (1974). Jackson cites this book as one of the major guiding forces in his life.

It was first published in 1974, and is a work of philosophical non-fiction which sold 5 million copies worldwide. It was originally rejected by 121 publishers, more than any other bestselling book, according to the *Guinness Book of Records*.

Bill McKibben and Middlebury College

A decade ago, for the January term at Middlebury College, Jon Isham taught a course titled "Building the New Climate Movement." Four students from his January 2005 class, along with three other students who shared their interest, put learning into practice: They founded 350.org, the grassroots global climate movement with more than 1 million members in 188 countries. Initially the friends shared two apartments in the Old North End, where they lived and worked together. They had no formal office, but gathered around a big table with their laptops and coffee thermoses. The Web-based organizing campaign, with little funding, resulted in a 50-state effort of more than 1,400 climate rallies. The class concluded with a conference, "What Works? New Strategies for a Melting Planet," that Isham's students helped organize and present. National leaders of the green movement participated, including Bill McKibben, climate activist, author and scholar-in-residence at Middlebury College. When the class ended, students continued to explore the issues it raised and to advocate for environmental causes on campus. They forged collaboration with McKibben that's been in place for a decade. McKibben co-founded 350.org with the Middlebury graduates.